The Maryland Yellowthroat
Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004 VOL. 24, NO. 4

President's Corner

Let's Make It Happen!

by Janet Millenson

I am pleased to become president as MOS enters its 60th year. We belong to a very special club whose virtues can be summarized quite simply: MOS means *more birds, more birding, and more birders* in Maryland.

MORE BIRDS: We love to search for unusual birds, record our sightings, and gather valuable data from seasonal counts and atlasing. Through our sanctuaries, research, and advocacy, we help conserve Maryland's birds and their habitats.
MORE BIRDING: We organize hundreds of field trips and evening programs each year, and the annual conference is a non-stop birding blast that shouldn't be missed.
MORE BIRDERS: We can find fellow MOS members all across the state, and our scholarships and educational activities encourage eager newcomers to share our goals.

Without you, none of this could happen. Your time, your money, your enthusiasm, and your energy make possible more birds, more birding, and more birders, whether you are a scientist in the field full-time or just keep an eye on the birds outside your window. I deeply appreciate your support of MOS.

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MOS Conference Wrap-up

June 11-13, 2004

Some 222 people from all over the state attended this year's Conference, which took place at Washington College (the first college chartered in the newly independent USA, in 1782) in Chestertown, Kent County. We occupied 160 college dorm rooms; birders carrying bedding across the campus became a common sight. Tasty and substantial meals were served at the main college dining room, located in the same building as the registration and field trip sign-up areas and the silent auction and artists' displays. The dining room also hosted the General Meeting, conducted after dinner on Saturday by MOS President **Paul Zucker,** who moved things right along with his customary aplomb.

Shortly before the conference started, the scheduled Guest Speaker, **Clay Sutton,** was suddenly taken to the hospital. On very short notice, Conference Coordinator **Janet Shields** was able to secure **Dr. Doug Gill** of the University of Maryland, and Doug proved to be an inspired choice. His exciting, ongoing story of grassland restoration at nearby Chino Farms energized the entire group in the college auditorium (and earned the highest score of any aspect of the weekend in the post-conference evaluations). Many conferees were able to visit Chino Farms on field trips and see for themselves how well birds have responded to the renewed habitats on this Kent County farm that once specialized in corn and beans. At Saturday's Business

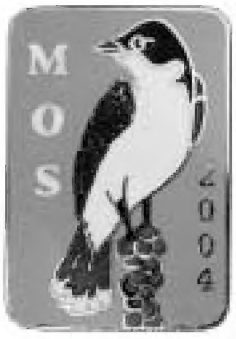
Paul Zucker presents MOS Conservation Award to Dr. Doug Gill.

Meeting, President Zucker presented Dr. Gill and **Dr. Henry Sears,** owner of Chino Farms, with the MOS Conservation Award.

Walter Ellison and a bevy of busy trip leaders put together a comprehensive and wide-ranging set of field trips. Cumulatively, 158 species were identified, a very good number outside of migration season, according to **Bob Ringler,** who conducted the tally at Sunday lunch. Highlights included Dickcissel, Bobwhite, and numerous Grasshopper Sparrows at Chino Farms, and Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kites soaring over the skies near Elkton in Cecil County. A night-bird trip led by Ringler and **Floyd Parks** turned up Chuck-will's-widow and Virginia Rail. The trips to the coast found a good variety of shorebirds (including Hudsonian Godwit), and the "county listers'" trips ticked all the expected breeding warblers. In addition to the regular field trips, there were trips specializing in butterflies, dragonflies, geology, sparrow identification, and

(Conference 2004 continues on page 2)

CONFERENCE 2004 *from page 1)*



landscaping with native plants. **Wayne Bell** and **Martha Shaum** of Washington College presented a workshop for teachers on the subject of biodiversity.

The Silent Auction and Raffle raised $2,355, to be divided between the Ecology Corps at Sudlersville Middle School and youth activities sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center. Several school-based groups took part in the Research Posters session and participated in the Educational Exhibits area. It was great to see so many young birders at the conference and on the field trips.

The Maryland Yellowthroat
Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by September 25, 2004 for the November/December issue.

Illustrations on pages 1, 4, 8, 9, 11 and 13
© M. Suzanne Probst

Ellen Lawler of the Tri-County Chapter won the pin competition with a beautifully rendered Eastern Kingbird; the pin design also appeared on the official conference T-shirts.

Principal organizers and guiders of the conference were Registrar/ Statewide Coordinator **Janet Shields** and Local Conference Coordinator **Nancy Martin**. They were assisted by a large group of volunteers from the host chapters, Kent, Cecil, and Talbot, plus some volunteers from other chapters who reprised the specialized functions they performed at previous conferences. The Society owes a deep debt of gratitude to all who helped make the 2004 Conference a resounding success.

—Michael Bowen,
Montgomery Bird Club

Auction Update

A fun MOS conference in Chestertown ended with a highly successful Silent Auction and Raffle. The Silent Auction netted $1,345.15 while the Raffle raked in $1,010, for a total of $2,355.15

The Auction opened at noon on Friday with a huge assortment of books (many donated by Betsy Blom from the late Eirik Blom's library) and lots of "birdy" items, of which no house can have enough. By Sunday morning only broken boxes and empty bags remained. Every single item found a home, if only temporarily. Don't forget—once you've read that book it can be brought back for resale. And that treasure you thought would look great but doesn't really fit? Toss it into a box for next year. Trust me, someone will take it.

Suggestions for changes and/or improvements in the Auction/Raffle are always welcome. Send your thoughts to me via email at ABTrowbridge@msn.com, or via snail mail at 1705 Lanier Place NW, Apt 306, Washington, DC 20009.

And now, a post-conference Mystery Quiz. How did the Silent Auction end up with 15 cents extra? Nothing was priced below a quarter. The cash register contained only quarters at start up. So…who tossed 15 cents into the till, and why? A still undetermined and fairly useless prize will be awarded to the winner.

—Maryanne Dolan,
Montgomery Bird Club

CONFERENCE 2005

Next year's annual conference—the organization's 60th—will take place **May 20, 21, and 22** at **Solomons, Calvert County**. This is only the second time an MOS conference will be held in Southern Maryland. As in 1999, it will convene at the Holiday Inn Select. State Coordinator Janet Shields is looking for suggestions for a Keynote Speaker, as well as for locations for 2006 and 2007. (Hopes for Cecil County have been dashed, since the Sandy Cove Ministries site is booked with return groups each year.) Janet can be contacted at 301-416-7109 or janetbill@prodigy.net

ATTENTION MOS ARTISTS!

You are invited to enter the 2005 Conference Pin Design Contest. The deadline is January 17, 2005. The basic rules are simple: entrants must be a member of MOS, and the design must contain a bird appropriate for the conference site (Solomons) and the phrases "MOS" and "2005." The back of each entry must carry the artist's name, address, and chapter affiliation and identify the species represented. The pin can be any shape. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886. To see all the rules and more tips about designing pins for the contest, see the MOS website http://www.mdbirds.org/activities/conference/contest.html or contact John Malcolm at 301-977-5788 or at smudgie@comcast.net.

DNR Reports... by Glen Therres

Colonial nesting waterbirds are a conspicuous and integral element of the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Bays ecosystems in Maryland; 21 species have bred in the state since the mid-1980s. Since waterbirds feed at the top of food chains, their population health is an important indicator of the state of the ecosystem. Development-related habitat degradation and loss, chemical contamination, over-harvesting by fisheries, and a rise in sea level are some of the major factors impacting population trends.

Colonial nesting waterbird populations have been monitored on an annual basis in Maryland since 1985. Dave Brinker and Jim McCann, who conducted much of the work, recently analyzed the results through 2003.

Surveys employed several techniques, including aerial and boat reconnaissance as well as ground-based searches. The researchers established the status of all colonies active at least 1 of the past 5 years, searched for potential habitat, and, using a variety of established methods, arrived at nest counts.

During the 2003 breeding season, searches located 145 colonies containing 18 species and 19,757 breeding pairs. Average colony size was 136 pairs. The average number of species per colony was 2, with a maximum of 12; most colonies (64%) contained just one species. Twelve colonies exceeded 500 pairs, collectively representing over half of the state's nesting waterbirds. The largest colony occurred on Skimmer Island near the Ocean City Inlet; it contained 12 species and 1,562 pairs, including a large mixed heronry, the state's largest Black Skimmer colony, and Maryland's only Royal Tern colony.

The greatest regional concentration of colonies occurred in the Coastal Bays region and lower Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay (south of James Island), which together contained 18 species, 56% of all colonies, and 61% of the state's breeding pairs. Waterbird numbers were especially high in the Smith Island area, with 26 colonies containing 11 species and 3,142 pairs. Elsewhere, colonies were sparsely and widely distributed on the western and upper eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, lower Potomac River, and at scattered inland areas in the Piedmont and Ridge and Valley physiographic regions.

Wading birds comprised over half of the colonial nesting waterbirds, with Great Blue Heron the most populous single species. Seven species exhibited significant population increases: Brown Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Black-backed Gull, Great Blue Heron, Least Tern, Little Blue Heron, and Royal Tern. Significant declines were detected for Black Skimmer, Common Tern, Gull-billed Tern, Herring Gull, and Laughing Gull. Laughing Gull declines are probably the result of displacement by Herring and Great Black-backed Gull populations. Black Skimmers and certain tern species have declined significantly, due in part to beach and island habitat loss; displacement by expanding populations of Double-crested Cormorant, Great Black-backed Gull, and Mute Swan; and/or increased mammalian predation. Double-crested Cormorant, Great Black-backed Gull, and Brown Pelican populations have expanded rapidly in recent years, and the trend is likely to continue. No statistically significant trends were detected in the remaining species.

In addition to monitoring **nesting populations of Brown Pelicans**, Dave Brinker has been banding young in the mid-Chesapeake Bay and behind Assateague Island. Pelicans first nested in Maryland in 1987 in the Sinepuxent Bay; breeding

(DNR Reports continues on page 12)

President's Corner *(continued from page 1)*

The challenge is to keep our Society going strong. First, we need to build better connections between members in different counties. Let's assemble "flocks" of sparrow lovers or shorebird fanatics or hawk enthusiasts (you know who you are) for statewide field trips and workshops. Let's have the larger chapters lend a hand to the smaller chapters. Let's get together beyond just the annual conference. With the upgraded MOS website and new discussion board, it'll be easier to share ideas.

Second, we need to do something for our Little Red Hens. You remember the story: The Little Red Hen planted the wheat, harvested the grain, and made it into bread without help from any of her friends. Once the fragrant loaf came out of the oven, however, everyone was eager to "help" her eat it. MOS has a number of volunteers who have single-handedly baked tasty breads for us, figuratively speaking, for years and sometimes decades. We're going to make it easier for more people to get involved, by breaking down the jobs into smaller, well-defined pieces. You don't need to be a board member or an expert birder to volunteer—there are many opportunities if you're eager to share your skills. (See box below.) Please contact me directly (president@mdbirds.org, or 301-983-9337) or ask one of your chapter representatives to pass along your name.

You're also welcome to attend a board meeting as an observer to learn more. Board meeting dates for the coming year are **September 11, December 4, March 12, and June 4 (tentative)**. Remember, we're basically an all-volunteer organization. If you want MOS to remain Maryland's best source of birds, birding, and birders, I encourage you to pitch in and help it happen!

Open positions include these areas of responsibility:

Development

Liaison: Environmental Fund of Maryland

Historian

Membership

Publicity Coordinator

Statewide Educational Activities

Youth Programs

Better Birding Through the Atlas Project

by Walter Ellison

As a birder once wryly told me, "Birding is easy; you just go to where the bird was seen and stay there until you see it." Well, a breeding bird atlas can tell you where a bird was seen during a recent atlas study so you can go there to seek it out. A bird atlas can serve as a rather complicated, but comprehensive, bird-finding guide.

Of course this perspective greatly oversimplifies the value of an atlas of nesting birds. Without bird atlases, how accurately would we be able to draw a bird's breeding range? We also might be hard put to visualize range expansion or contraction without the maps from consecutive atlases to vividly illustrate the pace and pattern of such processes.

Despite the potential benefits of a completed breeding bird atlas, I expect a number of birders may tend to view atlas work as just that—work—not worth doing when there are birds to chase and lists to build. It may seem preferable to leave the atlassing, especially block-busting in distant counties, to the serious, dedicated, and public-spirited among us. I contend that atlassing can be a valuable tool for honing birding skills, opening doors to becoming a birder who enjoys every bird walk more completely. At the risk of seeming more like David Letterman than gives me comfort, let me list eight ways this is so.

Number 1–Atlassing opens up the landscape for folks who may have fallen into a routine of visiting three to five favorite birding areas, like clockwork, in the appointed season. A year or two of atlassing hones knowledge of what habitats host which birds. Becoming a habitat birder makes one a more imaginative, curious, and independent seeker of fowl.

Number 2–Atlas field work speeds your becoming an expert for the birds of your region. Not only do you learn where birds nest in your patch, but as you explore you discover more about the year-round habitat potential. My partner Nancy Martin and I have discovered many good migration and winter birding spots while atlassing the Upper Eastern Shore (e.g., Great Oak Pond).

Number 3–Atlas birding largely takes place long after trees have leafed out, putting a premium on birding by ear. Summertime birding encourages the birder to learn not only songs but all manner of bird sounds. In the process, the birder begins to connect bird sounds to nesting biology and becomes more aware of the behavioral context of bird vocalizations. This, in turn, can be useful in general birding. For instance, knowing alarm calls can alert you to many a dramatic sighting of a predator in action, such as a hunting accipiter.

Number 4–Birding through the nesting season brings birders into contact with young birds and with adult birds in old and changing plumage. Little improves birding more than an appreciation of plumage variation. Atlassers learn juvenile plumages as they compile "FL" (recent fledgling) confirmations, as worn and molting parents feed those youngsters.

Number 5–Atlas exploration is often highly rewarding in aesthetic birding pleasure. Before I started working on atlas projects, I had no idea of the intimacy one can enter into with a bird engrossed in its breeding cycle. Concerned and busy parent birds often allow stunning looks. Naïve young birds also give great lingering views, and families of recently fledged birds are often incredibly cute without being cloying.

Number 6–The atlasser who spends time watching birds and their families comes to appreciate birds as unique and variable individual beings rather than as objects to be named, admired, and collected.

Number 7–Working on an atlas project brings a birder into the world of animal behavior. To confirm breeding or even to suspect it means being aware of the subtle (and not so subtle) behavioral signals being sent by nesting birds. Although behavior is almost never a clinching field mark, being aware of and knowledgeable about a species' behavior may add a critical grace note to a tricky identification—as anyone knows who has, for instance, carefully observed flycatchers.

Number 8–Finally, atlassing gently pushes a birder outdoors at the most active and biologically diverse time of year. Atlas work can provide the invitation to learn much more about the natural world than simply about the birds.

After all, if it was not to be outdoors with some of the world's most beautiful and vibrant creatures, why did we become birders in the first place?

Eastern Bluebird nestlings

The Conservation Connection

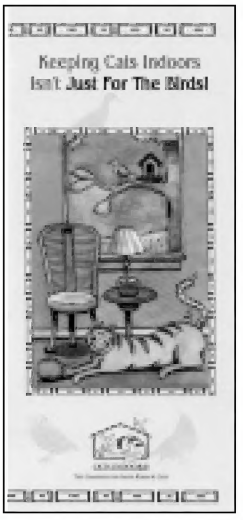
By Maureen F. Harvey

IN MARYLAND

MOS Members Review Proposed Conservation Targets. In June, four MOS members (Dale Johnson, Fred Fallon, Dan Boone, and I) attended a workshop at the National Wildlife Visitor Center hosted by Glen Therres, Assoc. Director, Wildlife and Heritage Service, MD Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The workshop was planned to inform and to solicit public comments on DNR's proposed list of MD's **Wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need.** This species list will be the basis for a Comprehensive Wildlife Diversity Plan, which each state is required to prepare to continue to receive State Wildlife Grants funded by the Interior Dept and administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The process used to develop the plan was outlined and the list was presented; posters listed the various categories of species; and participants were given the opportunity to ask questions of the biologists and botanists who did the research. (Avian species were presented by Gwen Brewer.) MOS attendees noticed that the plan includes resident and breeding birds only (i.e., no birds that migrate through). **The lists are available for public review and comments at DNR's webpage at www.dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/. Please take the time to view the lists and submit your comments.**

Synergics, Inc. Files for Permit to Build Roth Rock Wind Plant. In July 2004, Synergics, Inc. of Annapolis applied for a permit with the MD Public Service Commission (PSC) to build 23 wind turbines near Roth Rock, a Garrett Co. birding hot spot. Dan Boone and his brother, well-known Garrett Co birder Jon Boone, as well as preeminent MD conservationist Ajax Eastman, will file with the PSC as interveners in opposition to the project. MOS Conservation Committee will write to the PSC to express our concerns, and attach our April 2004 letter to Synergics and the Garrett Co. Commissioners (May/June 2004 *Yellowthroat*) to be incorporated the official record.

Backbone Mountain is the only area in the state that meets the minimum average annual wind speed needed for a commercial wind plant. MOS Conservation Committee believes Backbone Mountain is a poor choice for a wind plant, because it is an important migration route for hawks and Neotropical migrants. On this same ridge a few miles away in West Virginia, Mountaineer Wind Energy Center experienced **the single largest bird mortality event ever recorded in the United States** at a wind plant in Spring 2003. (The wind industry claims that the average kill is fewer than 2 birds and 1-2 bats per turbine per year. The Mountaineer event claimed 20 to 30-plus times this amount; the 550 or more carcasses found at this 44-turbine wind plant amount to more than half of the estimated 1,000 birds and bats killed **throughout a year** at the Altamont facility in CA, which has over 5,000 turbines. Bat expert Dr. Merlin Tuttle estimates the actual number of bats killed in WV to be closer to 4,000 than the 2,000 estimated by the wind plant's consultant.) Roth Rock is particularly unsuitable because the state-endangered Mourning Warbler and state-rare Winter Wren and Dark-eyed Junco breed there.



ABC Provides "Cats Indoors!" Brochures for Howard County Fair. The American Bird Conservancy set aside funds to offer free brochures to distribute to the public as part of their "Cats Indoors!" campaign, and Howard County MOS requested and received a big batch for distribution at the Howard County Fair in August 2004. The premise of the campaign is that both wild birds and pet cats benefit when cats are kept indoors. The cats lead healthier, safer lives and so do the birds! **If your chapter would like to assist in this campaign, or if you know of individuals or other organizations that could help, please contact ABC–Cats Indoors!, 1834 Jefferson Place, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (phone: 202-452-1535, e-mail: abc@abcbirds.org, web site: www.abcbirds.org).**

IN THE NATION

MOS Signs Letter to Oppose Weakening of EPA Rules. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed a regulation change that would diminish the protections offered endangered species from pesticides. In July, MOS, ABC, and many other conservation organizations signed on to a letter opposing this change, which would enable the EPA to assess the impact of pesticides on endangered species without consulting the USFWS and National Forest Service. The proposed change would also give the chemical industry special participation rights that would not be shared by the public. We oppose this change because it would weaken endangered species protections that have been responsible for the recovery of such species as the American Bald Eagle.

World Series of Birding

Maryland was well represented at the 2004 World Series of Birding sponsored by New Jersey Audubon. In addition to the **MOS team, The Holy Order of Loggerhead Shrikes,** two Youth Teams from Centreville Middle School competed in Division A (grades 5 through 8) and two more—enlisting graduates of Centreville Middle School teams—in Division B (grades 9-12).

The Shrikes—**Don Simonson, Andy Rabin, Gordon Gover, and John Hubbell**—birding in Cape May County, tallied 148 species of birds and raised more than $2,000 for two causes, the Atlas project and Pronatura Veracruz, the Mexican grassroots organization that protects the River of Raptors. Their complete list of species, plus photos from the Awards Brunch, can be found at the team website, **www.holyshrikes.com**. [The winning team, former Marylander **Michael O'Brien** and his wife, **Louise Zemaitis**, scored 164 in Cape May County.]

For the past several years, **George Radcliffe** has been shaping his Centreville Middle School students into WSB teams. This year the CMS Nighthawks scored 120 species, while the CMS Flaming Phoenix toted up 109.

At the high school level, three young Queen Anne's County birders—**Jim Wilson, Will Covington,** and **Ben Thiesse**, competed as Steiner Optic's Team Merlin and identified 143 species within Cape May County. In 2003, these three plus **Zach Baer**, competing as the Maryland Harriers, won the WSB competition—and they went on to win the ABA's new Junior Birder contest. This year, as noted in Chapter Chatter, Zach competed on a separate team, The Coastal Cuckoos, which covered the entire state of New Jersey and tallied 183 species.

Maryland/DC Fall Count 2004

The annual Fall Seasonal Count sponsored by MOS will be held Saturday, September 18 and/or Sunday, September 19. (For several years a number of counties have held organized counts on the third weekend of September. The MOS Board has left the choice of Saturday or Sunday to local chapters and coordinators.)

In areas without an identified coordinator, individual parties submit their results directly to the statewide coordinator. Chapters that have not included a formal count in their programs this year are urged to plan to do so in future years.

Everyone is urged to participate, regardless of skill level. Identification is only part of being successful; you have to spot the bird first, so every pair of eyes helps.

The guidelines for this count are the same as those used for all seasonal counts. Local coordinators will assign volunteers to areas, honoring requests whenever possible. Party leaders are responsible for tracking party miles and times, names of participants, and documentation for unusual sightings. A checklist compilation form is available on the MOS website, in the "Annual Counts" section: **http://www.mdbirds.org/counts/fall/fallcount.html**

The list includes the species one would expect to find in Maryland during this season. Those species on the list requiring further written documentation are noted with asterisks, and all write-ins require full details.

County coordinators who have volunteered so far are listed on the website. Anyone else already organizing a count or interested in volunteering as a coordinator for another county is encouraged to contact me.

If you don't have web access, or if you want to count in a county without a coordinator, contact me directly. Individual parties or other groups (e.g., hawk watch sites, field trips) who count in areas without a coordinator are also asked to submit their data, along with details on the area covered, directly to me by October 11.

Deadline for submitting completed reports to your county coordinator is no later than October 11, 2004. County compilers are asked to submit compilations by November 1.

Plan to join the fun and have a great day birding!

Chuck Stirrat,
Fall Count Coordinator
13318 Hunt Ridge,
Ellicott City, MD 21042-1155
Home phone: 410-531-2417
E-mail: stirrcr1@att.net (home)
Charles.Stirrat@jhuapl.edu (work)

Web Site Gets a New Look

Web sites are a little like granny's attic. They tend to accumulate a lot of odds and ends over time, and after a while the clutter makes it difficult to find items of interest. Our site reached this point when it grew to well over 300 individual pages this year. Since our long-range plan called for a complete redesign, we decided to tackle this job over the summer.

The MOS State Web Site made its first appearance on the World Wide Web in April 1996, and it has already gone through two "face lifts" and reorganizations. This time, we decided to enlist the assistance of a group of ten MOS users from various interest groups, with a wide range of web experience.

First, we considered who the web site should serve and what services should be offered. We decided that we would provide information for both MOS members and the general public.

Second, we looked at the existing pages and culled those that were redundant, obsolete, or not useful. Then we sorted the pages that were left into categories that would promote easy access. These categories formed the framework for a new navigation scheme.

While all this was going on, we also explored various sites that had the look and feel of the site we wanted. Your artistic webmaster developed a mock-up of a new home page that would also provide the template for all other pages on the site, giving us a uniform and professional look. After some tweaking, a final design was accepted.

The lengthy business of converting the site began in June and is expected to be completed to a point where it can go online by September 1. At that time, there will still be a good deal of work to do, and volunteers are needed to help update various sections and develop a few new ones. Primarily, we will need people to review the content of some pages and provide copy for updates. For instance, can you review and update the hawkwatch site page? How about the section on recurring walks? Can you provide information on available youth programs?

In addition to the list of one-shot projects, I will also compile a list of regular updates that occur during the year and the person or persons responsible for providing the information. Although this list will merely confirm current practice, it will help ensure that future updates are timely. In addition, the new design allows committees to provide photos, graphics, and other items to spruce up their sections. They can even design the way they want their pages to look. Any graphic representations in the white content sections of the templates will be totally up to the appropriate committees. Committee chairs or others who have pages on the web site should get in touch with me if they wish to explore this option.

Both lists will be available on the web site, in a future edition of the *Yellowthroat*, and by e-mail. No html coding experience is necessary, although if you wish to help or learn to code, your assistance would be most welcome. In addition to helping with the redesign, we need people to serve as assistant webmasters and train to eventually take over the main job. If you are interested, let me know. I can be reached at webmaster@mdbirds.org.

—Fran Saunders

Webmaster's note: MOS has been granted permission to use photo shown above.
Photo ©Peter La Tourrette, http://birdphotography.com

In the Scope: Charlotte Folk

Charlotte Richardson Folk, a native of Frostburg, displayed an early interest in birds and the outdoors, and while still a student at Beall High School she often helped at Pleasant Valley Outdoor camp. Billie Taylor, one of the original members of MOS and a teacher in Frostburg, asked her to help with a bird count and the rest is history! Encouraged by Billie and Nan Livingstone, Charlotte joined the Allegany County Bird Club in 1952.

Charlotte, who had embarked on what would be a 44-year career as a bank teller, met and married Dan Folk in 1959. In 1961 she and Dan had a daughter, Nancy Fern. That same year, they joined MOS. At that time, MOS was looking to find land for a bird sanctuary in Garrett Co. Dan and Charlotte joined the committee, which also included Billie Taylor, Nan Livingstone, and John Workmeister. In 1963, MOS purchased Carey Run.

Charlotte and Dan soon began to take care of Carey Run. Charlotte looked after the house and reservations, while Dan was in charge of the grounds and maintenance. This arrangement settled into a pattern that would last until Dan's death in 1995. Indeed, Charlotte continues her work to this day. Moreover, she has recruited Roger Shurg, who worked with Dan in maintenance at Frostburg State College, to take over the mowing and maintenance.

In addition to her work at Carey Run, Charlotte presents nature programs at local schools, as well as at State Parks such as New Germany and Rocky Gap, and she has helped Ken Hodgdon with outdoor schools and summer camps. She is also very active in her church, Frostburg United Methodist, where she serves as Treasurer.

In the Allegany County Bird Club, Charlotte is known fondly as "Minnie Pearl": She and daughter Nancy travel to Tennessee every year, returning with many jokes and souvenirs of Mountain humor. She always has a smile on her face and a joke up her sleeve. When Charlotte gives a report at club meetings, she always throws in a "one-liner" just to see if we're paying attention. Charlotte has served diligently as the ACBC's Treasurer for many years, and since she's still living in the same house in Frostburg, we're pretty sure she hasn't absconded with any of our prolific funds! For years she also has been in charge of our annual Fall Banquet, the highlight of the year, especially for members who have been in the club for a long time. The Allegany County Bird Club is all the richer and better for Charlotte's tireless efforts and friendly personality. Charlotte Folk *IS* the Allegany County Bird Club!

—Barbara Gaffney
President, ACBC

Martha Waugh: Leaving Chapter Chatter, but continuing to chair Investments Committee

For the past several years, Martha has kept us informed about the wide variety of projects undertaken by MOS chapters throughout the state. The adventures, ideas, and experiences of individual birders appeared along with the news of each chapter. Martha allowed us to appreciate a variety of personal aspects of Maryland birders of which we may not have been aware.

Preceding every issue of the *Yellowthroat*, Martha's personal request went out to each of her chapter contacts: "Anything for Chapter Chatter?" As one of them recalls, if expected items did not arrive in a timely way, Martha would send a "gentle reminder." Other contributors remarked that many times their forwarded news items were less than finished, often "cryptic" and "barely outlined." But Martha invariably worked their ideas and thoughts into interesting and informative stories.

In her resignation, Martha notes with her usual sense of good humor, "I'm retiring from Chapter Chatter after nine great years of meeting fascinating people by phone and by email and getting to hear all their good stories (some not for publication)."

Over the last nine years, Martha's Chapter Chatter has enabled us to share the experiences and successes of Maryland birders. Thanks, Martha!

We're going birding with WHO?

In April, George and Barbara Gaffney of Allegany County spent three weeks along the Rio Grande. Barbara writes: "We had a total of 228 species with 20 life birds including Whooping Crane, Paraque, and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl. Our real 'life bird,' however, was getting to bird briefly with President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter in Santa Ana NWR! It was quite a thrill. We were able to get both a [life] Tropical Parula and a [life] Harris's Hawk for the Carters." On the Gaffney's last day in Texas, they birded at Anahuac NWR and saw another "bird"—Dave Harvey of Carroll County. "It's a small world," says Barbara.

Thanks to Maryland birders, Carey Run is lookin' good

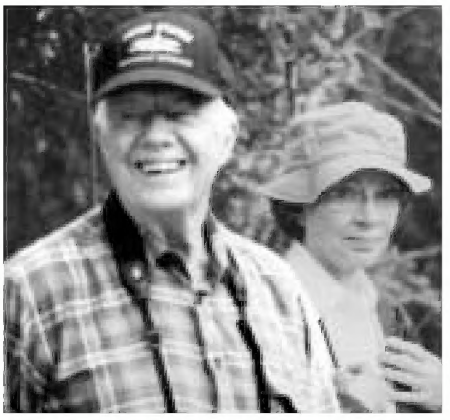
A Carey Run work day weekend was attended by 15 persons: George and Barbara Gaffney, Courtney Englar, Corlista Crowe and her sister, Lyla Holliday, and Roger Shurg from Allegany County; Doug and Nancy Parker from Frederick County; and Janet Shields, Bob and Mary Keedy, and Willie Lent from Washington County. The weather cooperated and we had a lovely Spring day.

George and Doug demolished and removed the false ceiling in the basement. It took two runs to the dump to get rid of trash from the basement and around the garden tractor shed. Courtney and Janet trimmed trees along the lane. Bob and George also trimmed the bushes and a tree by the house. Willie, Bob, Mary, Corlista, and Lyla worked very hard to clean the house. Our new shop vac came in handy, and the house has never looked cleaner! New curtains went up in the living room and all three bedrooms. Doug adjusted the lock on the basement door so it closes easily.

Doug and Roger discussed what might be needed to reinforce the fascia and trim boards before new rain gutters and downspouts are installed. Doug has purchased the new gutters and downspouts, which are slated to be installed at a "Project Day." Doug also reinforced the area around the electric line where it feeds into the house, and covered the hole in the roof. Doug rewrote the instructions on the hot water tank so they can be read and marked the lines on the electric box.

We all enjoyed a well-deserved break at lunch time under the big tree in front of the house. The fried chicken was very generously donated by Pam Hager's brother, Bill Warn, owner of the Hen House. It was delicious and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Everyone brought a covered dish to share and we had a "work-day feast."

Since the work day, stone has been put down in the lane. This new surface is not only great for driving but also looks terrific. Thanks to Chuck Hager for finding the right person for the job and for staying on top of things.



President and Mrs. Carter bird at Santa Ana.

Many tasks remain at Carey Run, and future "project days" will be announced. We hope to see more participation from MOS members from "downstate."

—submitted by Barbara Gaffney

Another Carroll County Bird Club member scores high in the birding game!

Over the last year, thanks to Bob Ringler, young Skippy Ringler has racked up an impressive number of birding travel miles and life birds. When asked how many birds he has on his life list, the pint-sized wonder remained modestly silent. Bob quickly explained, "It's the quality, not the quantity, that matters."

If you're lucky enough to meet Skippy, don't hesitate to say hello—and don't be surprised if he licks your hand. Last we saw him, he was watching two kites at Sean McCandless's home in Cecil County, while an admirer scratched his Beagle/Spitz ears.

MOS Chapters support Pickering Creek and Maryland's youth birders

The Pickering Creek Audubon Center in Talbot Co has enjoyed support from several MOS chapters. When the program—which works hard at getting lots of students outdoors and involved in the scientific aspects of birding—began in the fall of 2002, both the Talbot and Caroline Chapters generously provided support for the purchase of binoculars.

More recently, the Montgomery County and Anne Arundel Chapters—and numerous individual members—supported Pickering Creek by backing Zach Baer's World Series of Birding efforts. Zach solicited pledges for the center because, he explained, "It is directly involved with the local school system, and

every student in it gets an opporunity to learn about their local wildlife, including birding and bluebird monitoring." Zach's team, The Coastal Cuckoos, placed second in the youth category and eighth overall with a tally of 183 birds, and Zach raised $2,200 for Pickering Creek.

Block-busting plus pizza works well for Tri-County Bird Club

Like most other chapters, the Tri-County Bird Club is responsible for a few atlas blocks in Wicomico Co that have been very sparsely covered. As *Carol Broderick* explains: "In order to catch up we decided to try some local block-busting. In May we had four teams out atlasing, covering two areas on one Saturday and two more the following Sunday, with the teams alternating blocks morning and afternoon.

"We then met for pizza on Sunday night to combine our lists. Everyone agreed it was fun being in the new areas, and it was amazing how many 'possibles' were recorded. We repeated this mini-block-busting in July and were able to confirm a great many of those sightings. It's a great way to get coverage without anyone taking on full responsibility. At the wrap-up, we all agreed to continue this next year in the weakest areas—of course, that's along with everyone's assigned blocks."

Baltimore Bird Club's Cylburn bird exhibits are closed to the public

Recently, *The Sun* carried an article that described the closing of displays at Cylburn, both that of the Baltimore Bird Club and that of the Cylburn Arboretum Association. The action was taken because the exhibits are inaccessible to the handicapped (Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA). Discussions have been under way since September 2003 to find ways to solve this inaccessibility so that the exhibits might be reopened.

One proposed permanent solution is to renovate the Carriage House behind Cylburn's mansion. That renovation would provide space for meeting and work rooms. Displays would be placed throughout the various rooms. However, this is an expensive solution. It means redesigning the area and would require a vigorous campaign to raise money.

The Cylburn Arboretum Association hopes to expand their educational programs to include urban ecology, the environment, Jones Falls Valley, forestry, horticulture, and bird studies.

Congratulations to New Grandads

From *Paul Zucker*: "Yesterday, my daughter-in-law gave birth to our first grandchild, Samuel Asher Martin. The baby was 5 pounds 6 ounces, and mother and baby are both doing quite well. Our son, Andrew, is ecstatic, as are we."

From *Marty Cribbs*: "My youngest child, Rebecca Leigh, presented me with my first grandchild today. His name is Nathanial Branham Bourgault and he weighed in at a very healthy 8 lbs 1oz. Beckie, her husband Steve, and my grandson are doing well. Everyone is tired but will be back to normal in a few days. I've already sent Nathanial the 4th edition of *National Geographic Field Guide* and a pair of binoculars. I hope by Christmas he will have his 100th life bird and have worn out that first pair of binoculars."

REMEMBERING:

Ono H. Lescure

One-hundred-year-old Ono H. Lescure, a near life-long summer resident of Squirrel Island, was buried in Ruxton, MD, in April. She bequeathed over $12,000 to the MOS Sanctuary Fund.

Ilse Kind Kuch

Chan Robbins shares memories of an old friend, Ilse Kind Kuch: "For many years, Ilse was one of the Baltimore Bird Club's most active members. She joined MOS in 1946 and served on the Executive Council from 1947 to 1949, then on the Executive Council of the Baltimore Bird Club after Baltimore became a separate chapter of MOS in 1949. Ilse led many field trips, and she and her husband Herman participated in others as well.

"Ilse was especially interested in observing behavior at bird nests. She published a note in *Maryland Birdlife* describing a pair of Carolina Wrens roosting in a phoebe nest during the winter.

"Ilse and Herman dropped out of MOS activities when they moved to Honey Brook, Pennsylvania, but we continued to keep in touch with Ilse after Herman's death. We received a note from Ilse's niece in December saying that Ilse had died on April 20, 2003 at the age of 99 1/2 , having enjoyed life until her last few months."

Summer Camp Scholarships

Marylanders who work with young people are eligible to win one of 10 or 11 MOS scholarships to National Audubon Society summer workshops. Do you know of someone—a teacher, camp counselor, park ranger—who could take advantage of this opportunity?

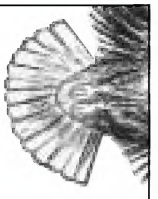
The six-day workshops focus on ornithology, ecology, conservation, and natural history, and they are set in Maine, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming (though the 11 winners in 2004 all opted for Maine). Each grant covers the cost of tuition, room, and board; travel expenses are the responsibility of the recipient.

Applicants need not be members of MOS, but they have to be endorsed by a chapter or member. Each candidate must submit a letter laying out how the Audubon experience will further their work with young people; two letters of recommendation; and a current resumé. Applications are due by January 31, 2005; awards are made by early March.

Inquiries and applications can be addressed to:

Jean Fry
1202 Ridge Road
Pylesville, MD 21132
Phone: 410-452-8539

Telling Tales



Overheard on the boardwalk at Magee Marsh, Ohio: "Look, Honey, it's a Parulean!"

Minutes, MOS Board Meeting
March 6, 2004

President: Paul Zucker
Vice President: Janet Millenson
Treasurer: Shiras Guion
Secretary: Janet Shields
Past President: Karen Morley

Budget: Helene Gardel
Conference: Janet Shields
Conservation: Maureen Harvey
Investments: Martha Waugh
Long-range Planning: Karen Morley
Nominations: Al Haury
Yellowthroat: Lydia Schindler
Sanctuary: Dotty Mumford
Scholarship: Jean Fry
Atlas: Walter Ellison
World Series of Birding: Don Simonson

Allegany: Gwen Brewer, Barbara Gaffney; **Anne Arundel:** Al Haury, Dotty Mumford; **Baltimore:** Mary Chetelat, Helene Gardel, Peter Webb; **Caroline:** *not represented*; **Carroll:** Maureen Harvey; **Cecil:** Candi Lee, Rick Lee; **Frederick:** Marcia Balestri, Helen Horrocks, Linda Keller, Doug Parker, Nancy Parker, David Smith, Michael Welch; **Harford:** Thomas Congersky, Jean Fry, Larry Fry, Randy Robertson, Jean Wheeler; **Howard:** Mary-Jo Betts, Karen Darcy, Kevin Heffernan, Martha Waugh; **Kent:** Walter Ellison; **Montgomery:** Sam Freiberg, John Hubbell, Lydia Schindler, Don Simonson, Rick Sussman, Ann Weeks; **Patuxent:** Fred Fallon; **Talbot:** Shirley Bailey, Bill Novak; **Tri-County:** *not represented*; **Washington:** Judy Lilga

President Paul Zucker called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. and thanked the Frederick County Chapter for hosting the meeting at C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick, MD.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with a minor correction.

Treasurer's Report: The audit is complete. Shiras Guion also reported that the taxes have been done and filed.

President's Remarks: Paul announced that Bob Ringler has agreed to prepare seasonal reports for *Maryland Birdlife*. *Yellowthroat* has a new look thanks to Sue Probst. The board previously voted to approve the new committee structure and the budget was drawn up based on that structure.

Review of Action Items:
- Candidates are still needed for chairs of Conference, Scholarship, and Sanctuary Committees and Environmental Fund of Maryland liaison. Another member is needed for the Investment Committee.
- Contact Marcia Balestri about Atlas support and fundraising events planned for April 24, in Frederick. Contact Rick Sussman about Atlas support at the Montgomery Big Sit on April 24.
- Lydia Schindler has received some chapter newsletters.
- Al Haury is slowly obtaining updates to the Speakers List.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget: Helene Gardel presented the budget for 2004-2005. Under Scholarship Fund, the Orville Crowder and the Gibson/Mendinhall Scholarships were changed from $880 to $960 each. The board approved the budget.

Conference: Janet Shields reported conference registration forms would be in the mail as of March 9. The Ecology Corps at Sudlersville Middle School and the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center Youth Programs are to be the recipients of Silent Auction/Raffle proceeds.

Conservation: Maureen Harvey reported that the Conservation Committee is sponsoring a Baltimore Bird Club project to inform people statewide about shade-grown coffee. MOS needs a policy on wind power. Maureen will review the American Bird Conservancy policy on wind power and make recommendations.

Investment: Martha Waugh handed out her investment report, which is now based on the fiscal year. She compared what MOS earned and the value of its funds at the end of 2002 and 2003.

Long-range Planning: Karen Morley announced that the By-Laws have been reviewed. Changes to them are not needed in order to implement our new committee structure with the exception of the Executive Secretary position. The changes needed are in the Manual of Operations and can be voted on at a board meeting. Karen will try to have some draft changes to the Manual of Operations for the board at the June meeting.

Nominations: Al Haury gave an update on the slate of officers to be elected for next year. Janet Millenson has agreed to be nominee for the President's position. Janet Shields has agreed to be nominee for the Secretary's position. Emmalyn Holdridge is nominee for the Treasurer's position. The Vice President's position is still open and a candidate needs to be found.

Yellowthroat: Lydia Schindler informed the board that it was a pleasure to work with Sue Probst, Howard County, and Candi Lee, Cecil County, who are doing excellent jobs.

Scholarship: There were 13 scholarship applicants, Jean Fry reported. There will be nine scholarships awarded to Maine Field Ornithology and two scholarships to Natural History of the Maine Coast. Their winners' names will appear in the next issue of *Yellowthroat*.

Atlas: Walter Ellison announced that a $100 donation was given by the Allegany Chapter and will be matched by Howard. The board has made a request for funding to DNR; we should find out in June what amount we will be awarded. Lots of mini routes are available.

World Series of Birding: Don Simonson reported that the Holy Order of Loggerhead Shrikes will raise funds for both the Atlas Project and for Pronatura Veracruz, a Mexican grassroots organization that helps

protect the river of raptors, on May 15. Their new website is www.holyshrikes.com. The board approved the proposal that 2/3 of the profits go to the Atlas and 1/3 go to the Pronatura Veracruz project.
Sanctuary: Dotty Mumford explained that the committee is planning to improve their coverage on the MOS website. Rather than workdays there will be sanctuary projects. Information about them will be in the *Yellowthroat*. On May 1 there will be a work date at Carey Run.

Electronic Discussion System: The installation of the discussion board was completed Wednesday night. Janet Millenson reported that the Executive Council was able to use it last night. She sees it as a very useful tool for internal communications among committees, chapter presidents, and Executive Council. This would not be used for organization-wide announcements; there is a website redesign under way which should be able to accommodate this. The name of the discussion board is MOS Call Notes. It will be for registered users only. Next Janet will provide a deployment plan.

OLD BUSINESS

Getting MD Birdlife CD ROM to Libraries Statewide: A lot of libraries don't want a CD but would like to have it online. SAILOR (Pratt Library) is willing to put it on their website for free. The catch is that the searchable aspects of the disc cannot work on the net. Janet will check into this.

Ordering Yellow Books: Yellow Books are currently sold for $3. The question has come up as to whether or not that should include postage. In order to clear up the issue, Paul Zucker wanted a vote taken. It was approved by the board that mailing costs (postage, packaging, etc.) should be added to the price of MOS sale items that we are requested to mail.

NEW BUSINESS

Research Committee Needs Funding for New Proposals: The Research Committee has received five proposals and Gwen Brewer announced there is not enough current year money to fund all of them. They would like to fund four of them fully. They are requesting $2,675.64 from the Endowment Fund to fund the four proposals. The fifth proposal is for a satellite tracking study of juvenile Bald Eagles in the Chesapeake Bay. The Research Committee proposes funding $1,500 of their expenses. The Research Committee wants to use income from the previous year, plus carryover money from previous years, plus about $3,000 because there were such a large number of deserving proposals. The board approved the Research Committee's request for money to fund the five proposals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

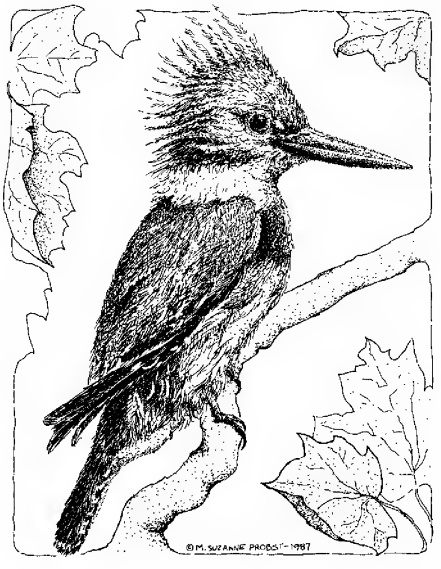
MOS Awards: Paul Zucker requested that suggestions for awards to be given out at the annual conference be sent to him by May 1.

NEW ACTION ITEMS

- Chapter presidents and committee chairs should submit end-of-year reports to Paul Zucker as soon as possible (final deadline: early June).
- More artists are still needed to display their works at the annual conference. Suggestions should go to Dale Johnson.
- Chapters should send Conservation Chair Maureen Harvey the contact information for their chapter's conservation representative.
- The Baltimore Bird Club is compiling a statewide list of where to buy shade-grown coffee. Please fill out the questionnaire and return this information to them.
- Maureen Harvey will review the American Bird Conservancy policy on wind power and recommend what MOS should do.
- Martha Waugh is still seeking a replacement for Larry Fry, who is retiring from the Investments Committee. If you are interested or can suggest a candidate, contact Martha.
- Committee chairs should contact Karen Morley (before the June 5 board meeting) to help revise the Manual of Operations to accurately reflect their goals, functions, and membership.
- A candidate for Vice President of MOS is needed by the end of March. Contact Al Haury or the other members of the Nominating Committee.
- Many existing and new positions are open. Contact Paul Zucker to suggest candidates for Scholarships, Sanctuaries, Membership, State Educational Activities, Youth Programs, Conference, EFM representative, and Historian.
- Anyone interested in doing Atlas mini routes should contact Walter Ellison. Also, some Atlas blocks are still available; contact the appropriate county Atlas Coordinator.
- Make your pledges now to our World Series of Birding team. This can be done online at www.holyshrikes.com. The event is scheduled for May 15.
- Janet Millenson will prepare a deployment plan for the new MOS discussion board, Call Notes.

President Paul Zucker adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Shields, Secretary



Meet Your New Officers

President Janet Millenson: I've been interested in birds since childhood. I clearly remember the mimeographed picture of Bobwhites that I had to color with the proper shades of brown and tan for an elementary-school unit on Maryland birds. As a teen, I relied on an old pair of opera glasses and a small edition of Audubon prints to identify the species that visited our modest Bethesda backyard. Since 1980 I've participated in Christmas Bird Counts (ask me about the California quicksand incident) and last year became co-compiler of the Sugarloaf CBC. I also lead a sector of the Seneca CBC and cover an Atlas block in Montgomery County.

My other favorite outdoor activities include leading hikes for local chapters of the Sierra Club and the Appalachian Mountain Club—always carrying binoculars, of course. I especially love the desert and have visited the Grand Canyon more than a dozen times. Most memorable bird sighting: a Dipper at its nest along Bright Angel Creek.

My non-birding husband, Herb Edelstein, is very tolerant (usually) when I add yet another item to my collection of antiquarian bird books and art, or leave at odd hours to commune with nature. He and I are data-mining consultants (Two Crows Corporation) and work at home, unfortunately in a room without a view of the bird feeders. My son David is another non-birder. Our African Grey parrot, Pascal, does pay close attention to interesting wildlife such as soaring hawks, but can't be trusted to identify them correctly.

I joined the Montgomery chapter of MOS when we moved back to Maryland about 14 years ago to be near family. (Great-great-grandfather Millenson came to Maryland in the 19th century, so I have relatives across the state.) Combining my passions for birding and publishing, I was editor of the chapter newsletter for six years, worked on the Montgomery County site guide, and currently help produce *Maryland Birdlife*. I'm looking forward to working with a great group of people to make MOS even better.

Vice-President Marcia Balestri: I was born and raised in Charlotte, NC, and attended UNC at Chapel Hill, graduating with degrees in Chemistry and Geology. I moved on to graduate school at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, where I received a Master's degree in Geology. I worked for over 20 years for government contractors before starting my own company, performing environmental consulting for private industry as well as government clients. I retired this year, although I still do some consulting from time to time.

My husband Bob and I moved to Maryland in 1987 (he is a native Marylander). I came to birding late in the game when we moved into our house in Frederick in 1991. (I missed all those great western birds in New Mexico!) We live in the woods, and I bought a Peterson Guide to try to identify the birds that were coming to a feeder left by the previous residents. The next year my uncle from California, who has been birding since he was 8, came for a visit, and he showed me the nuts and bolts of recordkeeping, as well as the wonders of birding. With his help, and the great skills and patience of the folks in the Frederick Chapter, this wonderful pastime quickly became a passion with me. Now when Bob and I travel, it's not just a matter of "Is there a golf course?" but also "Are there fun birds to be seen?"

I also enjoy gardening but don't do enough of it; reading novels, especially mysteries and science fiction; and planning our trips by pouring through birding catalogs and searching web sites (so many places, so little time).

I look forward to working with the members of MOS in the coming years, and believe there is great potential for MOS to make a difference by educating the public to our mission, fostering research on birdlife, and encouraging the protection of Maryland's natural resources.

Secretary Janet Shields: Having been a real estate agent for 10 years, I felt it was time for a change. I discovered birding and wanted weekends and evenings free, something that was often not possible. Therefore, about 6 years ago I started to work as an assistant for another real estate agent. After joining the Washington County Chapter of MOS in 1995, it took a field trip to Bombay Hook in 1997 to convince me I wanted to spend more time birding. I've tried to be fairly active ever since, with both the Washington and Frederick County chapters. At the State level, I've served as secretary for the past four years and have been active on the Sanctuary Committee. And I have now added the job of State Conference Coordinator.

At home I have outdoor birdfeeders and indoor birds—most of them were given to me by people who no longer wanted to care for them. In 2000, I birded in Alaska; in the spring of 2004, I enjoyed migration at Crane Creek SP in Ohio—leaving my understanding non-birding husband at home to take care of the indoor birds, the outdoor feeders, and the dog.

Treasurer Emy Holdridge: While growing up on a farm in northwestern Ohio, I spent a great deal of my time in the great outdoors, roaming in the fields and the surrounding woods. After college I wanted to leave all of that behind me, and I looked instead for the bright lights of the city. I ended up in Baltimore, where for most of my career I was the Budget Officer for Baltimore County Public Schools.

The love of being in the outdoors never really left me, however, and now that I'm retired I spend most of my time volunteering at the Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel. When I'm not volunteering I'm usually birding, most often in Howard County. I'm happy to serve as the treasurer of MOS and look forward to being more closely involved with the organization and its members.

DNR Reports *(continued from page 3)*

expanded into the middle portions of the Chesapeake Bay (Smith Island archipelago) in 1992. Population growth has been strong and rapid since 1999; more than 2,000 pairs now breed in the mid-Atlantic each summer.

More than 95% of Maryland chicks and a significant proportion of those in the mid-Chesapeake Bay have been banded—a total of 7,455 Brown Pelican chicks through 2003. Colored leg bands, which make it easier to track individuals, have been used on more than 1,200 birds—and banded individuals have reached Maine, Bermuda, and Cuba.

Despite some recoveries of recently fledged chicks to the north, dispersal is primarily southward. Most juvenals reach North Carolina in November, and Florida and Cuba in December. Wintering individuals are becoming more frequent in the lower Chesapeake Bay and North Carolina. Mature birds are returning to breed near their natal colonies.

We will continue to monitor our colonial nesting waterbirds and work towards their conservation in the Chesapeake Bay through the Critical Area Program and in the Coastal Bays as well. If you see a banded pelican in your travels, it may well have come from our efforts!

Sanctuary Update

by Dotty Mumford

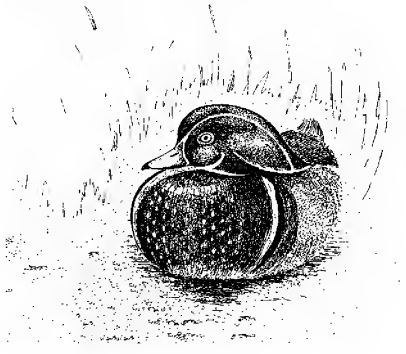
The last *Yellowthroat* carried an article listing projects that need to be done at our sanctuaries and asking for volunteers to help with these projects. The response from this article was virtually nothing. I find this very depressing. There are a few very dedicated people doing what they can at our sanctuaries, but they need lots of help. To have a successful sanctuary program, we really need more volunteers. Without more volunteers, I cannot see how we can continue to have a sanctuary program.

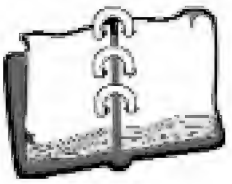
Furthermore, two years ago I asked to be relieved as Chairman of the Sanctuary Committee. So far no replacement has been found. It is long past the time for me to be replaced. I no longer have the energy to do the job and frankly, I'm tired of vainly asking for help, and obviously you are tired of hearing me ask!

On the positive side, progress has been made at Carey Run. The entry road has new gravel, and some improvements have been made, including a turn-around spot at the gate. With the help of a Boy Scout troop, some of the Autumn Olive has been removed. This work was accomplished through the efforts of Barbara Gaffney, Chuck Hager, Doug Parker, and Charlotte Folk.

At Irish Grove, the phragmites eradication continues, thanks to Doug Forsell, DNR, and USFWS.

If by any chance any of you would like to help, you can contact me at 410-849-8336 or Dottymum@comcast.net.





MOS Calendar

September-October 2004

Wednesday, September 1

Montgomery. C&O Canal & McKee-Beshers WMA. Half day. Meet 7:30 AM at Riley's Lock on bridge overlooking Potomac River. Bring scope, snack, and insect repellent. Leader will adapt route to avoid hunters. Reservations not required. Call leader for info or directions: Jim Green, 301-208-2393 (H) or 301-948-1518 (W).

Meeting. **Carroll.** Meet 7:30 PM at Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. Walter Ellison will present "The Invasion of the Gnatcatchers: A Cute Little Bird Conquers the North." For more info, contact Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Ft. McHenry. 9:30 AM-Noon. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Tuesday, September 2

Meeting. **Frederick.** Stauffer Miller will ask "What Is It about My Name?," a discussion of Stauffer's Marsh in WV and Stauffer's Puddle in Cape Cod. Meet 7 PM at C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick. Contact Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098, for info.

Saturday, September 4

Montgomery. Meadowside Nature Center and area. Half day. "Challenging" fall warblers and other migrant land birds. Meet 7:30 AM at Nature Center. Call for directions. No reservations necessary. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Cecil. Turkey Point: Warblers & 2004 Hawk Watch Kick-off. Meet 7 AM Turkey Point parking lot. Half day. Leader: Sean McCandless, 410-392-3407. Info: Richard Donham, 610-932-0634.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler Natural Area. Meet 7:30 AM end of Lemon Bridge Rd, off Laurel-Bowie Rd (MD 197) just north of Bowie College and MARC line. No reservations required. 3 hours.

Harford. Harford Glen. Let leaders guide you through marshes, fields, and forests of this perennial club favorite. Always a productive location. Meet 7 AM at upper lot.

Howard. Butterflies through Binoculars. Easy 2-hour walk along paved lakeside path. Learn basics of butterfly ID in the hand and through the lens. Great for beginners and experts. We'll probably spot birds, too. Facilities available. Meet 9 AM at west end parking lot, Centennial Park. Leader: Dick Smith, 410-997-7439.

Sunday, September 5

Talbot. Tilghman Island for warblers, flycatchers, gulls, terns, and more. Leader: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875. Depart St. Michaels Shopping Center parking lot, adjacent Talbot Bank, St. Michaels, at 7AM.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. Meet at Mansion's front porch Sunday mornings for easy birding in gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. Expect to find variety of migrant and resident birds. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834.

Baltimore. Butterflies of Soldiers Delight. Meet 1 PM at visitor center on left. 2 hours. Join butterfly expert Dick Smith for trip at this globally rare ecosystem. Slide show before walk to see these beautiful insects up close and personal. Canceled if raining. Call coordinator: Gail Frantz, 410-833-7135, to confirm date.

Tuesday, September 7

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. Meet 8:30 AM. Cylburn is a 176-acre nature preserve with trees, shrubs, wildflowers, gardens, and display flower beds, offering a nature oasis in the heart of an urban setting. One of best locations in Baltimore for migrants, especially thrushes and warblers. Great Horned Owl is breeding resident. Leader: Patsy Perlman, 410-466-3998.

(MOS Calendar continues on page 14)

MOS Calendar *(continued from page 13)*

MEETING. **Baltimore.** "The Shorebird-Horseshoe Crab Connection" by Gregory Breese of US Fish & Wildlife Service, Dover, DE. Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Doors open at 7 PM for refreshments and socializing. Lecture 7:45–9 PM.

Wednesday, September 8

Montgomery. Wakefield Park, Fairfax Co, VA. NoVa birder and Wakefield neighbor Mike Collins will lead us along this power line cut and adjacent woodlands in search of hard-to-find migrants (did anyone say Connecticut?). Limit 8. For reservations, time, and directions call coordinators: Linda Friedland, 301-983-2136 or Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252.

Baltimore. Green Mount Cemetery, 1501 Greenmount Ave. 8:30 AM walk to investigate bird life in Baltimore City. These pockets of green space are relatively undisturbed and unexplored. From I-83 take North Ave exit. At light, turn left (east) onto North Ave, go 10 blocks, turn right on Greenmount Ave, and go 4 short blocks. At Oliver St turn left into main gate and park. Leader: Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204.

Thursday, September 9

Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. Half day for migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area 18 (on Ridge Rd half mile below Nature Center). Reservations required. Call leader if unsure of directions: Rob Hilton, 301-587-6136.

MEETING. **Howard.** "Birding in Remote Parts of China" by Dr. Donald Messersmith. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM, meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec & Parks Dept., 7120 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. For info call Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5366.

Howard. Weekday Walk at Gwynn Acres. Easy walk on paved path through woods. Great habitat for migrant warblers and resident woodland species. Great for beginners. Reliable spot for Barred Owl. No facilities. Meet 8 AM for 1-2 hours. Call leader Bonnie Ott for info, 410-461-3361.

Saturday, September 11

Montgomery. Chincoteague NWR, VA. 7 AM to mid/late afternoon. Looking for terns, shorebirds, and other migrants. Entrance fee for Refuge. Call or e-mail leader for start time, location, and required reservation. Limit: 10. Many motels in area or en route for those who wish to arrive Friday. Leader: Clive Harris, 301-320-9769, clivegharris@yahoo.com.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge Park, Governor Bridge Rd. Meet 7:30 AM at park entrance. 3 hours, no reservations required.

Washington. Lilypons. Join Ann Mitchell as she guides us around this popular birding destination. Meet 8 AM at Rte 66 P&R. For info, call Ann, 240-420-0808.

Carroll. Birding at Hart-Miller Island. 6-8 mile walk for migrating shorebirds and whatever else may be around. All day trip, so pack lunch. Also recommend scopes, bug spray, sunscreen, and drinking water. Participation limited. To sign up or obtain more info, carpool possibilities, directions to boat, contact trip coordinator: Tammy Schwaab, 410-857-4913.

PICNIC. **Harford.** Annual picnic at Broad Creek Boy Scout Camp. Picnic 2-6 PM, followed by bird walk. Reservations required; call Jean Wheeler, 410-879-7424.

Howard. Five-hour hawk watch at Mt. Pleasant. Meet 9 AM at gravel lot, entrance road of farm. Bring chair and sustenance. Mown grass paths through fields and wood edges provide areas for walking excursions. Great for beginners. Facilities available. Possible parking fee since it is "Celebration of Nature Day" at the farm. For info, call leader, Ralph Geuder, 410-788-3764.

Frederick. Gambrill SP. Mike Welch will lead us on quest for fall migrants. Meet 7:30 AM, Baker Park. For info contact Mike, 301-874-5828.

Baltimore. Fall Warblers at Turkey Point. Philadelphia Vireo, Tennessee, Cape May, Bay-breasted Warblers possible. If songbirds disappoint, there are always the hawks! Moderate walk, half-day trip. Bring water and snacks. Meet Cromwell Bridge Rd, Beltway exit 29A, OR join us at "the Point" parking lot, end of Rte 272, Exit 100 S off I-95, at 7:30 AM. Leader: Joel Martin, 410-744-9211.

Sunday, September 12

Anne Arundel. Peter Hanan, 410-672-5672, will lead trip to Terrapin Park for migrants, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Many butterflies can also be seen. Bring your bike and ride along Cross Island Bike Trail to Kent Narrows and back. Those who wish will go to Holly's for lunch. Trip will leave from Bay 50 Shopping Center at 7 AM.

Talbot. Bay Hundred. Possibly Claiborne, Wades Point Inn. Morning walk. Breakfast host: Jean Crump. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-822-8132. Depart St. Michaels Village Shopping Center, corner Harrison & Goldsborough Sts, Easton at 7 AM.

Harford. Eden Mill. Grab a glimpse (and a handful) of southbound warblers, vireos, and thrushes as these migrants catch a meal and some rest in this scenic park along upper Deer Creek. Bird banding demo before walk. Meet 7 AM at lower lot.

Howard. Beginners' Bird Walk. Meet 8:30 AM, west end parking lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walk on paved path around lake to learn basics of bird ID, bino and field guide use. Fall migration in full swing so possibilities are endless. Facilities available. For details, call leaders, Karen Darcy, 410-552-9342, or Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See Sept 5.

Tuesday, September 14

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Program TBA. Joint with Prince George's Audubon Society. Meet 7:30 PM at College Park Airport Annex. Call Fred Shaffer, 410-721-1744, for more info or check website at www.audubon.org.

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sept 7. Leader: Adelaide Rackemann, 410-823-4709.

Wednesday, September 15

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Birding the Roof of the World in Tibet" by Daphne Gemmill. Slide presentation of eight adventurous birders looking for rare endemic birds, snow leopards, and other rarely observed animals while learning about Buddhist traditions and eating yak burgers. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. Info: Don Messersmith, 301-593-5942.

indicates **Field Trips**

Baltimore. Hampton National Historic Site. First year monitoring this interesting site. Explore 70 acres of woods, fields, pasture land, and formal gardens. Easy walking. Canceled in bad weather. Meet at site 8 AM for 3 hours. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Thursday, September 16

Montgomery. Triadelphia Area. Half day. Morning of woodland birding along Patuxent River watershed with excellent chance for early fall migrants. Meet 7:15 AM at Ashton Village Center (near 7-11), intersection of Rtes 108 and 650. Reservations required. Leader: Hugh Mahanes, 301-564-0780.

MEETING. **Caroline.** "Backyard Birds" presented by club members. 7 PM preview for kids. Adults welcome, too. Come identify bird nests and learn about feeders. Learn how to ID birds you see in your own yard. Meet 7:30 PM at Caroline County Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

MEETING. **Talbot.** "Gilbert Byron: Reflections on the Eastern Shore" by Jacques Baker. An in-depth look at local author's musings over Eastern Shore life. Meet 7:30 PM, basement of Suntrust Bank, corner Harrison & Goldsborough Sts, Easton.

Saturday, September 18

FALL COUNT. **Caroline.** Coordinator: Debby Bennett.

FALL COUNT. **Carroll.** Please coordinate locations with Bill Ellis, 410-781-7113. Join Tally Rally at home of Mark & Amy Hoffman at 7 PM. RSVP to Hoffmans, 410-549-3598. Food or $ donation, please. Results may be mailed to Bill if unable to attend rally.

FALL COUNT. **Anne Arundel.** First time for AA Club. Everyone urged to participate, no matter what your skill level. Call coordinator, Al Haury, 410-923-0881, cactuswren@erols.com, before Sept. 17 to let him know what area you will count and get more info and guidelines.

FALL COUNT. **Baltimore.** We will tally all birds seen within the City and County during this calendar day. Birders of all levels of experience welcome and urged to participate. To avoid duplication of counting, contact compiler, Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771, for assignment.

FALL COUNT. **Frederick.** Gary Smyle coordinates 7th countywide fall census. We need all ears and eyes, experienced birders and newcomers. Gary & Betty will host tally rally. Call Gary, 301-663-0055, to be placed with team or assigned a territory.

Patuxent. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. All-day trip for avocets and other shorebirds. Meet at Bowie P&R, Northview Dr, just off Rte 197. Call leader: Fred Shaffer, 410-721-1744, for more info.

Talbot. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. All-day trip for shorebirds. May also visit Woodland Beach WMA and Thorofare Rd areas. Bring lunch. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot, front of Acme, Easton at 7 AM. Depart Prime Outlets, Queenstown, front of LL Bean, 7:30 AM. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742.

Sunday, September 19

Montgomery. Presidents' Walk at Seneca. Half day. Participation of all former chapter presidents encouraged and everyone welcome. Bring lunch for post-walk picnic. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot, end of Riley's Lock Rd off River Rd. Honorary leaders: current and former presidents. Contact Hugh Mahanes, 301-564-0780.

Cecil. Turkey Point Warblers and Hawk Watch. Meet 8 AM at Turkey Point parking lot. Half day. Leader: Leslie Fisher, 410-658-2427. Info: Richard Donham, 610-932-0634.

FALL COUNT. **Allegany.** Chuck Hagar will be compiler for 15th annual Fall Count. Contact Chuck, 301-689-5344, for area assignments. Tally to be held at Ray Kiddy's house at 7 PM, 13103 Quarry Ridge Rd. Call Ray, 301-729-1972, for directions. Bring covered dish to share.

FALL COUNT. **Kent.** Contact Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568, rossgull@crosslink.net.

Talbot. Tilghman Island and surrounding hot spots. Breakfast host: Carolyn Mills. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002. Depart St. Michaels Shopping Center parking lot, adjacent Talbot Bank, St. Michaels at 7AM.

Baltimore. Cylburn. Self-guided walk. See Sept 5.

Baltimore. Chimney Swifts in Hampden. Come at 6:30 to see migrating Chimney Swifts as they pour into chimneys at the Bookbindery. Come 1 hour early if weather is cloudy or gray, as swifts enter chimney earlier. Last year 3,000+ swifts entered. Canceled if raining. Leaders: Carol Schreter, 410-664-5151, and Joan Cwi.

Tuesday, September 21

MEETING. **Kent.** Speaker TBA. Meet 7:30 PM Kent County Library, Chestertown. Info, Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. See Sept 7. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771.

Friday, September 24

Washington. Harpers Ferry, WV. A river walk and beyond. Meet Shirley Ford, 301-241-3020, at Rte 66 P&R at 8 AM.

Saturday, September 25

Anne Arundel. Patuxent River Park Boat Trip. It has been a few years since we last did this trip with Greg Kearns. Water birds, land birds, maybe an owl, and hopefully a Sora Rail. $4 fee for boat trip. Limited to 16 on boat. We will leave Parole P&R 6 AM for half-day trip. Call leader, Al Haury, 410-923-0881, for reservations and info.

Harford. Hidden Valley, Falling Branch, and the Gulch. Come explore properties that Harford Land Trust has helped preserve. See late migrating warblers, early northern migrants, and woodpeckers. Meet at north end Madonna Rd at Deer Creek at 7:30 AM.

Howard. Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. Meet 7 AM for half day, at gravel lot off Trotter Rd. Moderately difficult walk through woodland trails for fall migrants. Great for warblers, thrushes, and vireos. Philadelphia Vireo has turned up previous years. Boots recommended for tall grassy paths along river. No facilities. Call leader, Stan Arnold, 410-768-0155, for info.

Baltimore. Day at Hart-Miller Island for shorebirds. Meet 6:45 am sharp at boat dock. 8-mile, 10-hour hike on level ground under open sky with no shelter or shade; one rest stop (bathrooms) half

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way around trek. Wear hat and long pants. Carry scope, drinks, lunch, sunscreen, insect repellent. MD's best shorebird hotspot by far. Possible rare gulls, Merlins, and Peregrines. Possible Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, American Golden-Plover. Reservations required. For reservations, directions, and info: Gene Scarpulla, 410-388-0852, after 7 PM.

Tri-County. Chincoteague NWR. Leader: Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853.

Harford. Turkey Point Hawk Watch. Quickly gaining popularity among Harford birders. Join co-leaders Russ Kovach (443-386-4787) and Spike Updegrove for visit to this great Elk Neck site for Red-headed Woodpecker and migrating hawks. Meet at 8 AM at MD 155 & I-95 P&R.

Sunday, September 26

Caroline. Bird-banding observation in Chestertown at Jim Gruber's banding station at 9 AM, but meet at Rose's parking lot for carpool departure at 7:45 AM. Great for kids; adults welcome, too. For directions, contact Debby Bennett, firefly5845@hotmail.com.

Howard. Dickey Farm. Joint with Carroll Co Club. Meet 8 AM for half day at MD 32/I-70 P&R. Explore fields and woods of private Howard Co farm. Streams and ponds provide excellent habitat for wide variety of birds. Boots recommended; grass and paths may be muddy and wet. No facilities. Call leaders, Dave & Maureen Harvey, for info, 410-795-3117.

Carroll. Bird walk at Dickey Farm. Joint trip with Howard Co Bird Club. May be some wet spots so don't forget boots. Meet 8 AM at Rte 32 & I-70 P&R. For more info contact trip leader: Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117.

Patuxent. Bird banding at Jug Bay Wetlands (AA County) with Danny Bystrak. Meet 7:30 AM at Bowie P&R, Northview Dr, just off Rte 197. Call leader, Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518, for reservations.

Talbot. Pickering Creek Audubon Center in quest of all that is good. Leader: Mark Scallion. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot, front of Acme, Easton at 7AM.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See September 5.

Monday, September 27

MEETING. **Tri-County.** Program by Dave Wilson of MD Coastal Bays. Meet 7 PM at Asbury UMC, Fox Room, south entrance, Salisbury.

Tuesday, September 28

MEETING. **Washington.** "Peregrine Falcon Restoration" by Dale Nisbet of the NPS. Meet 7:30 PM at Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call Anna Hutzell, 301-797-8454, for info.

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. See Sept 7. Leader: Elliot Kirschbaum, 410-243-1481.

Wednesday, September 29

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS Media Center, Elkton. Raffle, refreshments. For info contact Rick Lee, 410-287-0415.

Baltimore. Hampton National Historic Site. See Sept 15.

Friday, October 1

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Cats Indoors! Efforts to Prevent the Killing of Hundreds of Millions of Birds and Small Mammals" by Linda Winter, Director of American Bird Conservancy's "Cats Indoors!" campaign. PowerPoint presentation. Meet 8 PM DNR Conference Room, Tawes Bldg, Rowe Blvd, Annapolis.

Friday-Sunday, October 1-3

Frederick. Cape May. Come with us on overnight trip to Cape May to watch hawks and other migrants at one of the country's great hot spots. For info contact leader, Dave Smith, 410-549-7082.

Saturday, October 2

Washington. Rocky Gap SP, offering variety of habitats as well as small aviary that houses birds used by DNR in its programs. Meet Anna Hutzell, 301-797-8454, at Rte 66 P&R 6 AM.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler Natural Area. Meet 7:30 AM at end of Lemon Bridge Rd, off Laurel-Bowie Rd (MD 197) just north of Bowie College and MARC line. No reservations required.

Harford. Susquehanna SP. Send off the last fall migrants and welcome some "cold weather" residents. Meet 7 AM at Rock Run Mill.

Saturday-Sunday, October 2-3

Baltimore. 50th Anniversary Celebration, Cylburn Arboretum. Numerous events celebrating Cylburn's half-century, including Breakfast with the Birds, followed by morning bird walk.

Sunday, October 3

Montgomery. Blue Mash Nature Trail. Half day. Migrant sparrows, warblers, other woodland edge birds. Waterproof boots essential. Meet 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Call leader for reservations and directions. Limited to 8. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Talbot. Adkins Arboretum: Meadows and lowland woods. Leaders: Karen & Bill Harris, 410-643-1947. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot, front of Acme, Easton at 7AM.

Anne Arundel. Joint with Howard Co Bird Club. Bonnie Ott, expert at finding and identifying sparrows, will lead us to Howard Co spots to see what we can find. Meet Al Haury, 410-923-0881, at Parole P&R at 6 AM for all-day trip. Bring lunch.

Howard. Sparrows of Howard County. Joint with Anne Arundel Co. Meet 8 AM for half day at Rte 100/ Meadowbrook P&R. Visit variety of sparrow habitats during peak of sparrow migration. This time of year, every species is expected, with chance for rarities. Knee boots needed for certain areas. Expect moderate to difficult walking. Facilities available at some spots. Call leader, Bonnie Ott, for info, 410-461-3361.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See September 5.

Tuesday, October 5

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. See Sept 7. Leader: Dot Gustafson, 410-584-9509.

MEETING. **Baltimore.** "The Art of Falconry" by Joe Platek, falconer. Doors at Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave, open at 7 PM for refreshments and socializing. Lecture 7:45–9 PM.

Tuesday-Wednesday, October 5-6

Montgomery. Chincoteague NWR, VA. Two days. Meet at "NEW" Visitor Center 7 AM. Bring snacks, beverages, sunscreen, bug spray, and lunch for first day (we will eat on refuge). Some moderate walking on trails and beach looking for late migrants, raptors, terns, gulls, shorebirds, etc. Call leader for reservations and more details. Limit: 12. Leader: Jim Green, 301-208-2393.

Wednesday, October 6

MEETING. **Carroll.** Meet 7:30 PM at Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. Edward Lohnes will present "Patuxent Sea Duck Project." For more info contact Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

Harford. Harford Glen. Explore marshes, fields, and forests of this perennial club favorite and see early morning bird-banding demo. Meet at upper lot at 7 AM.

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Ft. McHenry. 9:30 AM-Noon. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Thursday, October 7

MEETING. **Frederick.** Dave Brinker will present "Maryland's Biodiversity: The wonders of the Free State and how we go about biodiversity conservation." Meet 7 PM at C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick. Contact Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098, for info.

Saturday, October 9

Montgomery. Delaware Coast. Full day. Bombay Hook and environs for late shorebird migrants. Especially for beginning shorebird enthusiasts, but all welcome. Contact leader for reservations, start time, and location. Frank Witebsky will co-lead. Birding from road at Bombay Hook; some walking at other locations. Leader: Cyndie Loeper, 301-530-8226.

Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Everyone welcome, especially new birders, to enjoy area of varied habitats and bird life. Late warblers and vireos, early sparrows, and raptors possible. Contact leader for reservations, time, place to meet: Gemma Radko, 301-607-4374.

Cecil. Turkey Point Warblers & Hawk Watch. Meet 8 AM Turkey Point parking lot. Half day. Leader: Sean McCandless, 410-392-3407. Info: Richard Donham, 610-932-0634.

Howard. Fall Migrants of Mt. Pleasant. Meet 8 AM for half day at gravel entrance road. Moderate walk through fields and hedgerows in search of sparrows and other autumn migrants. Excellent view of flyovers. Paths and mown grass trails may be wet. Facilities available. Call leader, Bonnie Ott, for info, 410-461-3361.

Frederick. Lilypons Bird Walks. We need **volunteers** to be at Lilypons from 8:30 AM to 3 PM to lead bird walks and answer questions. Call Linda Keller, 301-834-6977, to sign up.

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Half day for warblers, thrushes, possibly shorebirds, and other delights. Meet 8 AM at entrance to walk main trail, if it is open. If not, we will move to less familiar parts of the park. Leader: Peter Lev 410-823-2962.

Tri-County. Gordon's Pond Wildlife Area, Indian River Inlet, and Assawoman Wildlife Area, DE. Leader: Allen Edward, 410-352-5590.

Saturday-Monday, October 9-11

Carroll. Columbus Day Weekend at Cape May, NJ. Wonderful place to be during migration, whether for a few hours, a day, or the weekend. Meet at Cape May lighthouse 10AM. For more info contact Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109. If planning to go, you must let Laura know by Sept 4 so accommodations can be arranged.

Sunday, October 10

BIG SIT. **Montgomery.** Join The Sitting Ducks at Black Hill Regional Park starting at sun-up and continuing until ? Come for the day or just a few hours. Call Rick Sussman for directions and more info, 301-774-1185.

BIG SIT. **Anne Arundel.** Kinder Park. Participate in this nationwide event by joining others in dawn-to-dusk event. Team effort; please try to participate for 1 or 2 hours or more. Contact coordinators, Tom & Sharon Bradford, 410-987-0674, to let them know time you can be there.

Talbot. Terrapin Park and Kent Island: Sparrow surprises? No breakfast. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651. Depart Prime Outlets, Queenstown, front of LL Bean at 7 AM.

Howard. Sparrow Big Day. All day; the ultimate fall walk! Search for as many individual sparrows as possible; we're shooting for 1,000+ birds. Will hit all Howard Co. sparrow hot spots. Moderate to difficult walking through many types of habitat. Some knowledge of sparrows helpful. Limit 10. Call leader, Bonnie Ott, to reserve spot and get details, 410-461-3361.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See September 5.

Monday, October 11

Harford. Waggoner's Gap. Fantastic locale near Carlisle, PA, for close views of migrating raptors and beautiful overlooks of fall foliage. All day, stationary watch; bring lunch. Meet at MD 152/MD 147 P&R at 7:30 AM. Call 410-692-5978 to confirm attendance.

Baltimore. Hart-Miller Island. Meet 8 AM at Nursery Rd & Hammond's Ferry Rd P&R for necessary carpooling to boat, then quick boat trip to the island and a half-day bus trip around the site. Possible rare gulls, merlins, and peregrines. Scope helpful; bring drinks, sunscreen, insect repellent, and snacks. Reservations required. For reservations and info: Gail Frantz, 410-833-7135.

Tuesday, October 12

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Program TBA. Joint with Prince George's Audubon Society. Meet 7:30 PM at College Park Airport Annex. Call Fred Shaffer, 410-721-1744, for more info, or check website at www.audubon.org.

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. See Sept 7. Leader: Matilda Weiss, 410-337-2732.

MEETING. **Allegany.** "Birds, Bats, and Wind Turbines" by Dr. Ed Gates of Frostburg State University. Let's all become more informed about this very controversial subject. Meet 7 PM at Frostburg Public Library, 65 E. Main St.

Wednesday, October 13

Baltimore. Hampton National Historic Site. See Sept 15.

indicates **Field Trips**

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MOS Calendar *(continued from page 17)*

Thursday, October 14

MEETING. **Talbot.** "Important Bird Areas: Where, Why, and How of the Project" by Dr. David Curson, Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon Maryland-DC. Meet 7:30 PM, basement of Suntrust Bank, corner Harrison & Goldsborough Sts, Easton.

MEETING. **Howard.** "Birdlife on Travels in India" by Arlene Ripley. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM, meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec & Parks Dept, 7120 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. For info call Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5366.

Friday-Sunday, October 15-17

Anne Arundel. Kiptopeke SP, Chesapeake Bay Bridge/Tunnel. Will stop at Chincoteague on the way (cannot get onto Fisherman's Island at this time). Migrant land birds, raptors, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Bird and raptor banding at Kiptopeke SP with chance to see migrants up close. Meet 8 AM at Bay 50 on Oct. 15. Contact coordinator, Al Haury, 410-923-0881, for details and info on motel reservations.

Saturday, October 16

Allegany. Meet Ray Kiddy to watch for migrating hawks at Round Hill at time of year when good variety of raptor species expected. Meet 7:30 AM at Mason's Barn P&R, Exit 46 East Cumberland from I-68. Bring lunch and drink. Call Ray, 301-729-1972, for info.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge Park, Governor Bridge Rd. Meet at park entrance 7:30 AM. No reservations required.

Howard. Audrey Carroll Sanctuary. Joint with Frederick Co. Meet 7:30 AM for half day at MD 32/I-70 P&R. Moderate walk on 130-acre Audubon sanctuary for sparrows and to learn basics of sparrow ID. Facilities available. Call leader, Bonnie Ott, for info, 410-461-3361.

Frederick. Audrey Carroll Sanctuary. Joint with Howard Co. Meet 7:30 AM at Rte 75 P&R, just south of I-70. Call leader, Janet Shields, 301-416-7109, for info.

Sunday, October 17

Talbot. Easton Wastewater Treatment Plant, in quest of waterbirds and early migrants. Leader: Andrew Borland, 410-310-2385. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot, front of Acme, Easton at 7AM.

Harford. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. Join experienced leader, Dave Larking (410-569-8319), for trip to this birding mega-hotspot fronting Delaware Bay. Dress warmly and bring lunch. Meet MD 155/I-95 P&R at 7:30 AM.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See Sept 5.

Tuesday, October 19

MEETING. **Kent.** Speaker TBA. Meet 7:30 PM Kent County Library, Chestertown. Info: Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. See Sept 7. Leader: Ruth Culbertson, 410-825-1179.

Wednesday, October 20

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Digiscoping: A New Technique for Photographing Birds" by Douglas Bolt. Doug will demonstrate digiscoping techniques, discuss advantages and disadvantages of widely available digital cameras and other equipment as well as show pictures of birds from Australia, Thailand, and Peru. Meet 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. Info: Don Messersmith, 301-593-5942.

Thursday, October 21

MEETING. **Caroline.** Program TBA. Meet 7:30 PM at Caroline County Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, October 23

Carroll. Morgan Run NEA. This area provides diversity of birding habitats. Meet 8 AM at Morgan Run parking lot, end of Ben Rose Lane, Eldersburg. For info contact leader: Bill Ellis, 410-781-7113.

PELOT SANCTUARY CLEAN-UP. **Caroline.** Meet 10 AM at Sanctuary (directions at website: http://www.mdbirds.org/sanctuary/sanctsites.html#pelot). Coordinator: Kurt Plinke, 410-482-2446.

Anne Arundel. Black Marsh (Baltimore Co). Half day for shorebirds, marsh birds, and migrants in a location we don't visit very often. Meet 8 AM at Jones Station P&R. Leader: Larry Zoller, 410-987-9354.

Harford. Swan Harbor Farms. This recently acquired park on Oakington Peninsula contains mix of flooded and dry agricultural fields, deciduous woodlands, and brushy meadows. Meet at park HQ, end of entrance road at 8 AM.

Frederick. Lilypons. Good for beginners. Possible American Bittern, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, other fall migrants. Meet 8 AM, Lilypons bridge. Call Mike Welch for info: 301-874-5828.

Baltimore. Northhampton Furnace Trail. Level walk through mixed woods and brushy habitats to edge of Loch Raven Reservoir. Good chance for Winter Wren, lingering robins, and waterfowl. Meet 8 AM at Dulaney Valley Rd and Chapelwood Lane, 2 miles north of Beltway Exit 27. Leader: Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204.

Sunday, October 24

Talbot. Hope House Farm, Tunis Mills, for birds of woodland, field, and waterfront. Breakfast hosts: Cap and Mattie Shaeffer. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8159. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot, front of Acme, Easton at 7AM.

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See Sept 5.

Monday, October 25

MEETING. **Tri-County.** "Comprehensive Plan for Blackwater NWR" by Glenn Carowan, refuge manager. Meet 7 PM at Asbury UMC, Fox Room, south entrance, Salisbury.

Tuesday, October 26

Montgomery. Waggoner's Gap, PA. Three-quarters day. 100+ miles from Washington beltway, but worth the trip. Excellent location for peak Goshawk and Golden Eagle migration. Scopes helpful. Dress warmly and bring cushion and food, including lunch (the rocks are cold, and once you climb to watching area it's annoying to return to your car). Trip may be rescheduled a day earlier or later depending on weather conditions. Call leader for info and reservations: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

MEETING. **Washington.** "Mountaintop Mining and its Effects on Avian Communities" by Dr. Frank Ammer of the NPS. Meet 7:30 PM at Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call Anna Hutzell, 301-797-8454, for info.

Baltimore. Cylburn Arboretum. See Sept 7. Leader: Josie Gray, 410-922-1837.

Wednesday, October 27

Baltimore. Hampton National Historic Site. See Sept 15.

Saturday, October 30

Patuxent. Patuxent River sites in southern PG County for field birds, sparrows, other grassland migrants at Merkle, Milltown Landing, and Aquasco Farm. Meet Bowie P&R 7:30 AM. Leader: Fred Shaffer, 401-721-1744.

Harford. Owl Prowl. Tame nightlife getting you down? Get with the pros as leaders guide you through Harford countryside to make "rarely heard, seldom seen" a thing of your owling past. Meet lower lot of Eden Mil at 5:30 PM.

Sunday, October 31

Talbot. JE duPont Shehan Audubon Sanctuary for water, grassland, and forest birds. Leader: Amy Bourque, 410-745-9283. Depart St. Michaels Village Shopping Center, adjacent Talbot Bank, St. Michaels at 7AM.

Tuesday, November 2

Baltimore. Loch Raven self-guided walk. Join BBC members every Tuesday in November at 8:30 AM for hike through woods and fields, with opportunity to see many migrants including Red-breasted Nuthatch, Rusty Blackbird, Fox Sparrow, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes. Scope the lake for Bald Eagles, swans and variety of other waterfowl. No designated leader. Coordinators: Elliot Kirshbaum, 410-243-1481, and Paul Noell, 410-243-2652.

Wednesday, November 3

MEETING. **Carroll.** Meet 7:30 PM at Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. Melissa Boyle will describe her MOS Scholarship trip to Hog Island, ME. For more info, contact Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

Howard. Bon Secours. Meet 8:30 AM in visitor parking lot for 2 hours. Easy-to-moderate walk on grounds of this lovely spiritual center. Woodlands and fields provide diverse habitat. Excellent view of sky for flyover hawks. Great for beginners. Facilities available. Call leaders, Michele Wright, 410-465-6057, or Eva Sunell, 410-995-0029, for info.

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Ft. McHenry. 9:30 AM-Noon. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Friday, November 5

Cecil. Turkey Point Owls. Meet 7 PM at Turkey Point parking lot. 2-3 hrs. For info contact leaders: Scott Powers, 410-658-2369, or Richard Donham, 610-932-0634.

Saturday, November 6

Montgomery. Blue Mash Nature Trail. Half day. Looking for hawks, sparrows and other woodland edge species at this fairly new park. Trip may cover area around Rte 108 and Riggs Rd, so carpooling may be necessary. Waterproof boots essential. Meet 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Call leader for reservations and directions. Limited to 8. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

Carroll. Saw-whet Owl Banding. Join Steve Huy at his banding station at top of South Mountain, south of Frederick. Limit 10. For more info including carpooling possibilities, contact coordinator, Tammy Schwaab, 410-857-4913.

ANNUAL BANQUET. **Allegany.** Keynote speaker TBA. Meet 5:30 PM at Frostburg UMC Social Hall, 48 Main St. Call Charlotte Folk, 301-689-6587, for reservation. Call Charlotte or Barb Gaffney, 301-895-4646, for info. Cost of dinner ($13; students $10) includes tax and gratuity. Send payment to Charlotte Folk, 179 Mt. Pleasant St, Frostburg, MD 21532.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler Natural Area. Meet 7:30 AM end of Lemon Bridge Rd, off Laurel-Bowie Rd (MD 197) just north of Bowie College and MARC line. No reservations required.

Sunday, November 7

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM, west end lot off Centennial Lane, for 3 hours. Easy walk around lake on paved path. Great for beginners. Facilities available. Call leader, Kurt Schwarz, for info: 410-461-1643.

indicates **Field Trips**

Research Committee Funds Four Projects

Thanks to MOS support for research on birds, the Research Committee (**Sue Ricciardi, Jim McCann, Dave Brinker, Mark Johnson, Sam Droege,** and **Gwen Brewer**) has awarded funds to four projects so far in 2004. (Unfortunately, a fifth project had to be cancelled when the researcher fell ill.)

- Three eagles that had been rescued from a large silt pit and fitted with satellite transmitters are being tracked as they migrate to and from the Chesapeake Bay area.
- Vocal communication by male Red-winged Blackbirds is being studied to determine whether they use different song variations to convey different information.
- The ecology of the Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow is being compared to that of the inland subspecies in Garrett County to look for specializations that result from life in the salt marsh.
- Variations in plumage color of the male Baltimore Oriole, due to an orange pigment influenced by diet, and the male Orchard Oriole, whose dark pigment is independent of diet, will be compared to see whether both plumage types can serve as signals of male fitness.

Look for the results of these projects as posters at an MOS Annual Conference or as articles in *Maryland Birdlife*!

—Gwen Brewer, Chair
MOS Research Committee

VIDEO REVIEW

Watching Sparrows: A Video Guide to the Sparrows of the United States and Canada

Blue Earth Films (2003)
Runs approximately 1 hr., 20 mins.

When filmmakers Michael Male and Judy Fieth showed *Watching Warblers* to the Montgomery Bird Club back in the 1990s, we were among the first American birders to see their initial venture into the birdwatching arena. We were absolutely blown away, and lined up to buy our very own copies of the video. Their next effort was *Watching Waders*—very pretty, but large water birds just seem to lack the subtleties of shape and color that make sparrows so fascinating to many birders. Now comes *Watching Sparrows*, which to my mind, eyes, and ears, is even more impressive than *Watching Warblers*. Male and Fieth, as cameraman and sound recorder respectively, are consummate perfectionists, and what has survived the cutting room is a beautiful, informative, and satisfying set of images and sound bites.

Watching Sparrows covers 33 species of sparrow, 6 of towhee, and 5 of longspurs and buntings. Emphasis is on singing males on breeding territory, and there is some absolutely stunning footage. My personal favorite is the Black-chinned Sparrow—Michael Male captures every feather nuance. The narration, alternately by Fieth and Male, is soft-spoken, almost diffident at times, but suffused with genuine love and admiration for these delightful little birds. Race and subspecies details are just hinted at, except for a few possibly "splittable" groups like Fox Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco. The females of some species of towhee are not shown at all. Real sparrow junkies (and we know you are out there, Bonnie Ott and Frank Witebsky!) will not be completely satisfied with this brief, albeit compelling, introductory roundup. But what a gorgeous roundup!

Blue Earth Films offers both VHS video and DVD versions of *Watching Sparrows*. At only $5 more, the DVD version is the one to have if you possess the hardware to run it. It gives you the convenience of a taxonomic or alphabetical index, so if you wish you can skip the easy stuff and jump directly to *Aimophila*. Or you can turn off the audio voice-over and just listen to the sparrows. Even more valuable, you get a "bonus" disk that, among other things, tells you about the filmmakers' long search for the Black-chinned Sparrow and explains (I always wondered) why the Salt-marsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow doesn't have a proper breeding-area song. Best of all on the bonus disk is the "Fun with Songs" track, in which songs are slowed down to 50% or 20% of their normal speed. Makes us humans envious because we don't possess a syrinx!

Watching Sparrows is available from many local nature-oriented stores or directly from Blue Earth Films. You can visit their web site at www.birdfilms.com. Male and Fieth deserve the continuing support of the birding community, so that they can keep on making these great bird films.

—D.H. Michael Bowen, Montgomery Bird Club

LAST CALL

. . . for **Fall Count Data,**
deadline October 11.
Contact Chuck Stirrat,
410-531-2417.

NEXT-TO-LAST CALL

. . . for **Research Proposals,**
deadline December 1.
Grants are available for
ornithological research
conducted in Maryland.
For info, contact Gwen Brewer,
glbrewer@comcast.net.

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